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## How Busy Philipps "Controls the Variables" to Make Traveling With Kids Easier

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When it comes to staying sane as a parent, one of Busy Philipps's favorite things to do is travel. Instead of waiting until her girls are "old enough" to remember, this mom of two and actress is a strong believer in exposing her kids to different cities and cultures, but most importantly, using travel as a way to reconnect the family unit.

However, with 8-year-old Birdie and 3-year-old Cricket, Busy knows that having a relaxing trip is easier said than done. To minimize as much stress as possible, Busy has learned to "eliminate the variables" wherever she can by always prioritizing space and snacks (what she calls her 2 Ss) as well as [these other tips](#) proven to minimize meltdowns:

1. **Book as much space as you can:** "When we travel, we always book a suite; we love staying at [Embassy Suites](#) because we love having extra space for our family and it's reasonably priced," Busy told POPSUGAR. But this extra space isn't just about allowing her family to bring more luggage, it's also for the opportunity it gives her and her husband after their girls go to sleep.

"If you can have a moment with your husband to chill before you pass out, because you're exhausted too, that's always nice," Busy said. "The family time is great, but kids are kids, and I don't know a family that has perfect children (and if they exist out there, I would be jealous of that), but it's nice to have your own time, too.

Because space is a variable that you can control, we always go for more space when we travel."

2. **Consider bringing more when you can:** Busy described herself and her girls as overpackers, and she's perfectly fine with that. "I like bringing things because even when visiting different cities and sites, your kids need downtime to unwind, so I'm fine with packing books, toys, and I even like bringing watercolor paint, because it's something you can do anywhere," she said. "Now we also have iPads, which didn't even exist when Birdie was a baby, but now **Moana** is at Cricket's fingertips – she's always going to be happy if she can sit, chill, and watch **Moana**."

3. **Plan big "reveals":** To cope with long drives or flights, Busy comes prepared with a bag of surprises for her kids that buys her extra time during the journey. "Years ago, I read a hack about wrapping little things like that and then you 'reveal' them if you're on a long flight at times when the kid is starting to get restless," she said. "But it doesn't have to be something extravagant or expensive, you can just literally go to a drugstore; they are happy to have anything on a plane."

4. **Minimize TV to build excitement:** A friend of Busy's, Christa Miller, once gave her a tip about traveling with kids, and this genius idea stuck. "Years ago, she told me that the day before they go on a flight, she won't let her kids watch any TV because when they get on the plane, they are so excited to watch TV that you buy yourself at least a couple of magazines' worth of free time," Busy said. "She has three kids so she knows it all, so sometimes I try to limit their television watching the day before a flight, so that we can maximize our television watching on the flight."
5. **Always have a snack bag (for the adults, too):** It doesn't matter where she's going, Busy will always pack emergency food first. "I'm a big believer in snacks and traveling with your snacks, only because kids and me, too, never want to get stuck having to eat some garbage that you're not going to enjoy just because you're hungry," she said. "So I always try to pack a snack bag, some fruit, occasionally I'll throw in an avocado, because everybody loves an avocado!"